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# THE MILITANT

A SOCIALIST NEWSWEEKLY PUBLISHED IN THE INTERESTS OF WORKING PEOPLE

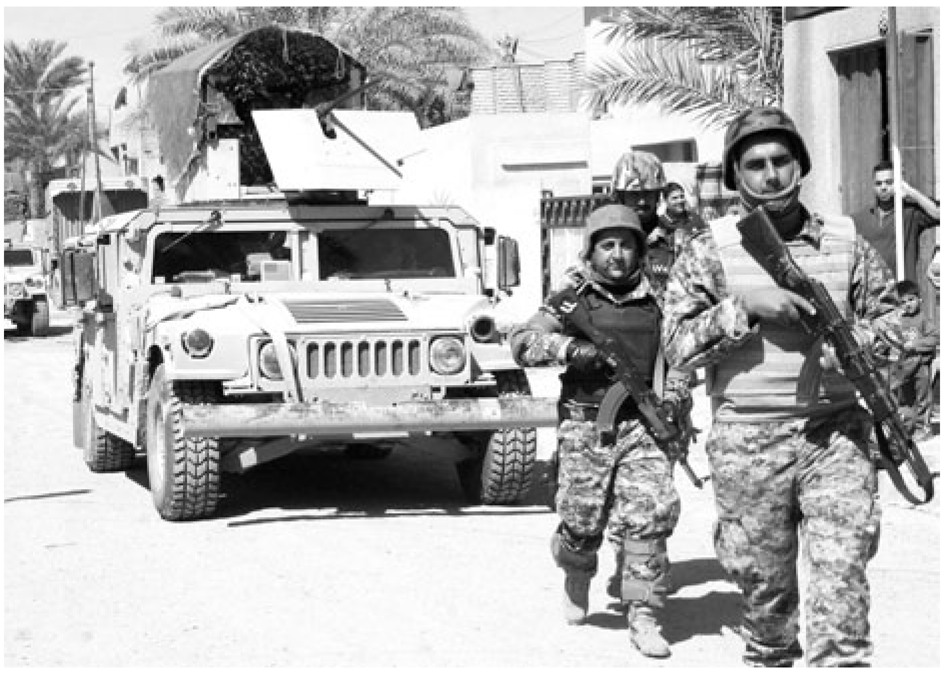
VOL. 71/NO. 11 MARCH 19, 2007



# 7,000 more U.S. troops to be deployed to Iraq

## Washington escalates imperialist war

## 1,100 U.S. troops in Sadr City; airstrikes up



AFP/Getty Images/Wisam Al-Okaili

**Iraqi special police forces escort on March 6 U.S. convoy into Baghdad suburb of Sadr City, a stronghold of the Shiite militia led by Muqtada al-Sadr. Washington has moved 1,100 of its occupation forces there, as part of sending 28,500 more troops to Iraq.**

**BY SAM MANUEL**

WASHINGTON, March 7—The Pentagon announced March 1 it is planning to send 7,000 additional troops to Iraq to support the 21,500 combat forces moving into Baghdad and Anbar province since U.S. president George Bush announced in January the escalation of the imperialist war in Iraq. That would bring the additional troops to 28,500 and the total number of U.S. forces in the country to

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# *U.S. forces in Afghanistan kill at least 23 civilians*

**BY BRIAN WILLIAMS**

March 5—U.S. Marine Special Forces conducting operations in eastern Afghanistan yesterday opened fire on civilians by the roadway near Jalalabad, killing at least 14 and wounding dozens of others. Later that evening U.S. warplanes dropped two 2,000-pound bombs that killed nine other civilians—three children, five women, and an elderly man—in a house in Kapisa province, just north of Kabul.

In response to the Marines' gunfire assault, several hundred protesters blocked the main road from Jalalabad to the border with Pakistan for two hours. They shouted, "Death to America," and "Death to Karzai," referring to Afghan president Hamid Karzai, the Associated Press reported.

U.S. military officials said the Marines were responding to the detonation of a car packed with explosives near their convoy. Interviews AP conducted with wounded Afghans, however, show that U.S. forces were firing indiscriminately along at least a six-mile stretch of one of the busiest highways in eastern Afghanistan. This is a route filled with cars and trucks as well as foot traffic and bicycles.

"They were firing everywhere," Tur

**Continued on page 7**

# Stock market jitters show capitalism's world disorder

**BY PAUL PEDERSON**

March 6—In the afternoon of February 27 the three leading indexes in the U.S. stock market—the Dow Jones, Standard and Poor's 500, and Nasdaq—all plunged more than 3 percent. Stock markets in Europe, Asia, and elsewhere followed suit.

Much of the big-business media claimed that a 9 percent drop in Shanghai's stock market triggered the international downswing.

Leading Democratic politicians seized on the news to promote protectionism and American nationalism. Sen. Hillary Clinton, especially, blamed the growing U.S. deficit and the "foreign holders" of the U.S. debt, whom she claimed threaten the "economic sovereignty" of the United States.

## NEWS ANALYSIS

Wall Street's jitters, however, did not originate in China, and the U.S. debt or its "foreign holders" have nothing to do with them.

The tremor on Wall Street and in other imperialist financial centers registered the growing instability and world disorder of capitalism.

It was a sign that the stock market boom of the past decade and a half could turn into a bust, since it is largely based on speculation and not on productive investments, in a period of a long-term decline of industrial profit rates.

The day of the plunge, a major mortgage-buying institution and the U.S. Commerce Department both made announcements that revealed further stagnation in U.S. manufacturing and erosion in the confidence of lenders, who made billions on risky loans to home buyers and others in the last decade.

**The hype about China**

"A lot of the issues we need to deal with . . . are made all the more difficult if we are dependent upon foreign governments, such as China," Hillary Clinton told Bill

**Continued on page 3**

# Thousands of Chinese protest racist report by N.Y. TV station

**BY MARTÍN KOPPEL**

NEW YORK—Thousands of Chinese immigrants and their supporters rallied here February 26 in front of Channel 11 headquarters to protest a TV news report alleging that a Chinese restaurant in Brooklyn had served mouse meat in a takeout order.

Demonstrators carried signs calling for a boycott of the television station and demanded an apology.

The protest was sparked by a January 29 CW11 news report that a customer allegedly found something resembling "mouse meat" in a chicken and rice order from New Food King restaurant in Canarsie, Brooklyn. The report included statements such as "disgusting find," "sickening surprise," "nasty dining experience," and "rodent slathered in garlic sauce."

A January 31 follow-up report included statements by a "professional food inspector" who supposedly tested the meat to prove the station's allegations. Channel 11 did not allow the restaurant's owner, You Yong, to examine the "mystery meat."

The February 26 protest was the second one organized by Chinese and

**Continued on page 7**

# *March 17-18 rallies across U.S.: 'Pull the troops out of Iraq now!'*

**BY RÓGER CALERO**

NEW YORK, March 6—Thousands are expected to participate in actions across the United States over the March 17–18 weekend to demand immediate withdrawal of U.S. troops from Iraq. The rallies, marches, vigils, and other activities coincide with the fourth anniversary of the U.S.-led invasion of Iraq.

One of the events is a "March on the Pentagon" sponsored by the ANSWER coalition. It will take place Saturday, March 17, in Washington, D.C. Similar actions are scheduled the same day in Los Angeles, and Reno, Nevada; and the following day in San Francisco and Seattle. Sponsoring groups are organizing buses, vans, and car caravans to these actions from dozens of U.S. cities, according to the coalition's web site.

On Sunday, March 18, the United for Peace and Justice (UFPJ) coalition is holding a march in New York City to "Tell Congress: End the War on Iraq! No Military Attacks on Iran!" UFPJ is also sponsoring local peace actions March 19–20 in towns and cities across the country.

"We are building the march on the Pentagon, the action in New York, and those in other cities, and invite students, young workers, and others to join the Young Socialists and Socialist Workers Party contingents to demand: U.S. and all other 'coalition' troops out of Iraq and Afghanistan now! Imperialist hands off Iran," Ben O'Shaughnessy, organizer of the YS national steering committee, told the *Militant* today. "We will demand: Not one penny, not one man or woman, for Washington's wars!"

ANSWER, the acronym of the Act Now to Stop War and End Racism coalition, includes IFCO/Pastors for Peace, Free Palestine Alliance, Muslim Student Association, Nicaragua Network, and the Party for Socialism and Liberation. The latter was formed two years ago from a split in the Workers World Party.

UFPJ includes the Communist Party USA; Committees of Correspondence, a split from the CPUSA; and a host of liberal and pacifist groups such as American Friends Services Committee, Global Exchange, Green Party, National Organization for Women, PAX Christi USA, RainbowPUSH Coalition, and Veterans for Peace.

Reflecting the polarization in the United States on the war in Iraq, the March 5 issue of the *New York Post,* one of the main dailies here, published a column by Michelle Malkin calling for building a pro-war mobilization to counter the march on the Pentagon. This counterdemonstration is called by right-wing groups that support Washington's

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## Also Inside:

# The untold story of Chinese Canadians

*(First of two articles)*

**BY STEVE PENNER**

VANCOUVER, British Columbia—The Canadian government is continuing its history of racist discrimination against Chinese Canadians by refusing to compensate the 82,000 descendants of Chinese head-tax payers, explained Grace Schenkeveld, cochair of the Head Tax Families Society of Canada, in a February 12 open letter sent to government officials.

For decades Ottawa refused to admit that forcing Chinese immigrants—and no one else—to each pay between $50 and $500 to come to Canada between 1885 and 1923 was unjust.

The head tax was aimed at limiting Chinese immigration into Canada. It was imposed just after the Canadian Pacific Railway was built, using the labor of some 16,000 superexploited Chinese workers.

Last June Prime Minister Stephen Harper admitted that the law had been a violation of fundamental human rights. The government agreed to compensate living head tax payers, or their surviving spouses, $20,000 each for the terrible consequences of its policies.

However, the head tax was ended in 1923, and very few of those who actually paid it are still alive. Only 37 head-tax payers have been given the promised compensation.

Meanwhile the government hasn't paid one cent to any of the 337 widowed spouses who also applied.

Doug Hum, one of those fighting for redress to all head-tax families, said it took his father and uncle more than 10 years to pay off the $1,000 debt they took on to pay the head tax when they immigrated in 1912. They then were able to save just enough money to return to China and get married. But they couldn't bring their wives to Canada because of passage of the Chinese Exclusion Act in 1923. This law banned virtually all Chinese immigration for the next 25 years, separating families, like that of Doug Hum, for decades.

Only 44 Chinese immigrants were able to enter Canada legally between 1923 and 1947, when the racist law was finally repealed.

Last July 1—Canada Day—those fighting for head-tax redress held demonstrations in Vancouver, Calgary, Edmonton, and Montreal. Protesters carried signs proclaiming, "It's Still Humiliation Day."

The first "Humiliation Day" protests took place across Canada on July 1, 1923. The day was then called Dominion Day. For years, Chinese Canadians refused to celebrate this day.

These protests were not isolated events but part of the long history of struggle of Chinese Canadians and Chinese immigrants against the injustices they face.

Yet many Canadian historians claim that Chinese Canadians were "docile." For example, prominent labor historian Desmond Morton says that "Chinese labor, with its bare subsistence needs and docility, offered competition that no white worker could match and few white employers could resist."

These claims are false. Chinese immigrants fought for their rights and for more than "bare subsistence" from the moment they arrived, beginning in the 1860s.

In the 150 years since then, Chinese Canadian workers have participated in, and in many cases led, scores of strikes, fights to establish unions, and struggles for equal pay for equal work, for a shorter workweek, and for the organization of industrial unions.

These battles reinforced struggles by the Chinese community against a host of racist laws and policies. For example, in 1922 the Victoria, British Columbia, school board decided to segregate the senior grades and put all Chinese students in separate schools. (The first four grades were already segregated.)

The board claimed that having Chinese children in the same schools as whites led to the "retardation" of white children's progress as well as being "unsanitary." Worst of all, the local Chamber of Commerce warned, "White children sitting side by side with Orientals tended to develop the idea of social equality."

When school principals tried to march all the Chinese students to a separate Chinese school, students refused to go. The Chinese community organized the Anti-Segregation Association (ASA).

The ASA led a yearlong boycott by Chinese students of the schools. They forced the school board to retreat from its attempt to create a completely segregated school system. However, some Chinese students still had to go to separate schools or classes until after World War II.

*Robert Simms contributed to this article.*

## New Jersey protest slams 'migra' fee hike




Militant/Eddie Beck

NEWARK, New Jersey, March 1—Some 100 immigrant rights supporters rallied by Federal Building here today to protest a planned fee increase for permanent residency from $325 to $905.

# *Washington demands Pakistani rulers do more to fight 'terror'*

**BY SAM MANUEL**

WASHINGTON—U.S. vice president Richard Cheney personally delivered a warning from the White House to Pakistan's government that Congress might cut off aid to Islamabad if President Pervez Musharraf's government did not do more to fight al-Qaeda and the Taliban.

On the same day, British foreign secretary Margaret Beckett also dropped in on Musharraf to push the Pakistani government to take tougher action against the jihadist groups.

Cheney made an unannounced stop in Pakistan's capital February 26 accompanied by CIA deputy director Steve Kappes. U.S. intelligence agencies claim that Taliban and al-Qaeda supporters are regrouping in western Pakistan in preparation for a spring offensive against U.S. and NATO troops.

The Bush administration says that Musharraf has failed to keep commitments made during a visit to Washington in September. "He's made a number of assurances over the past few months, but the bottom line is that what they are doing now is not working," said one senior administration official, according to the *New York Times*. "The message we're sending to him now is that the only thing that matters is results," the official said.

Pakistan's government says it is doing all it can against the Taliban and al-Qaeda and that the use of force alone is undermining its own domestic security. Attacks by Islamist groups in Pakistan substantially increased following a U.S. air strike on an Islamic school last October, according to Strategic Forecasting, a private U.S. intelligence service.

The U.S. military overthrew the Taliban regime in the wake of the Sept. 11, 2001, attacks on the World Trade Center and Pentagon. There are 27,000 U.S. troops in Afghanistan, of which 14,000 are part of a 35,000-member NATO force propping up the U.S.-installed government of Hamid Karzai.




## The Militant

**Vol. 71/No. 11**

**Closing news date:** March 7, 2007

**Editor and circulation director:** Argiris Malapanis

**Washington correspondent:** Sam Manuel

**Editorial volunteers:** Róger Calero, Maura DeLuca, Martín Koppel, Olympia Newton, Paul Pederson, Jacob Perasso, and Brian Williams.

Published weekly except for one week in January and two weeks in June.
The Militant (ISSN 0026-3885), 306 W. 37th Street, 10th floor, New York, NY 10018.
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**Website: www.themilitant.com**

Correspondence concerning subscriptions or changes of address should be addressed to the Militant, 306 W. 37th Street, 10th floor, New York, NY 10018.

Periodicals postage paid at New York, NY.

POSTMASTER: Send address changes to the Militant, 306 W. 37th Street, 10th floor, New York, NY 10018.

**SUBSCRIPTIONS: United States:** for one-year send $35 to above address.

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**United Kingdom:** £25 for one year by check or international money order made out to CL London, First Floor, 120 Bethnal Green (Entrance in Brick Lane), London, E2 6DG, England.

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Communist League election campaign in Australia:

# Australian troops out of Iraq, Afghanistan, the Philippines!

**BY RON POULSEN**

SYDNEY, Australia—Alasdair Macdonald, Communist League candidate for Legislative Council in the coming New South Wales state elections, joined a February 22 demonstration of about 350 people here protesting the visit to Australia by U.S. vice president Richard Cheney and the war in Iraq.

In response to widespread anti-Americanism at the rally, Macdonald spoke out against the involvement of the government of Australia in the imperialist war, saying that working people and youth should concentrate their fire on the Australian ruling class. He pointed out that the CL platform demands "the immediate unconditional withdrawal of Australian, and all 'coalition' troops from Iraq, Afghanistan, the Philippines and all the theatres of imperialism's global 'war on terror.'"

On the eve of Cheney's visit, Prime Minister John Howard of the Liberal Party announced that Canberra would send an additional 70 military trainers to Iraq.

As the CL election statement notes, the imperialist wars in Iraq and beyond are an extension of the capitalist rulers' assaults on working people at home. Macdonald said the CL calls on workers to join the April 22 national union rally to protest the government's antiunion laws, called "Workchoices," and to "solidarize with workers' struggles around the world."

Macdonald, a member of the Young Socialists, is also campaigning among students. He is joined on the CL ticket by Joanne Kuniansky, standing in Lakemba in the New South Wales (NSW) Legislative Assembly (the lower house). Both are meat packers and members of the Australasian Meat Industry Employees' Union.



Militant photos by Bob Aiken

**Communist League candidates in March 24 elections in New South Wales, Australia. Joanne Kuniansky for Legislative Assembly; Alasdair Macdonald for Legislative Council.**

Kuniansky plans to campaign at the International Women's Day rally around the demands of the CL platform: "Oppose restrictions on access to abortion. Take abortion out of the NSW Crimes Act. Defend a woman's right to choose."

Supporters of the Communist League campaign joined Kuniansky in a January 26 demonstration of more than 400 Aborigines and others in Brisbane, Queensland. This protest was part of a campaign to demand prosecution of the cop who killed Mulrunji Doomadgee, an Aboriginal man, on Palm Island two years ago.

January 26 is a public holiday, officially called Australia Day, to mark the first British settlement in Sydney in 1788. This is when the genocidal war began to dispossess the Aboriginal peoples of the whole continent.

As the rally was taking place, news broke that Christopher Hurley, the cop responsible for Mulrunji's death, would be charged with manslaughter. This will be the first prosecution in Queensland history over a Black death in police custody.

The announcement "was met with raised fists," Kuniansky told the *Militant.* "Then the rally turned into a speakout about how to build on it by keeping up pressure for conviction."

The NSW elections are to be held on March 24.

# Drop in the stock market

**Continued from front page**

Griffeth, the CNBC TV interviewer March 1. Washington is too "dependent upon fiscal and other economic decisions that are made in foreign capitals," she said.

Others have presented a similarly inflated view of the weight of China in the world capitalist economy.

"The emergence of China's economy on the world stage may be the biggest investment story of our time," columnist Chris Mayer said in an opinion piece in the March 2 issue of *Moneyweek*. "In 1990, China was the world's 10th largest economy. Today, it is the fourth largest. That's mind-boggling growth."

Facts, however, give a lie to the contention that China's economy or stock market could be the cause of instability in the world capitalist economy.

Investment in the Chinese stock market has become a growing fad on Wall Street. The paper value of the stocks on the Shanghai index increased 210 percent in one year, from the end of 2005 to the end of 2006. They are now valued at $1.3 trillion.

But that figure is only 6 percent of the value of the stocks listed on the New York Stock Exchange. And much of the stock on the Shanghai exchange is held in state-owned companies and other entities that can't currently be traded.

"In 2005, China leapfrogged over France and Great Britain to become the world's fourth-largest economy," said an article in the February 27 issue of the German magazine *Der Spiegel,* making a similar point as *Moneyweek*. "If China continues to grow at the same pace, it will oust Germany as the world's third-biggest economy in only two years, perhaps even dethroning the United States from its leading position one day."

Such assertions, however, don't take into account that China has one-fifth of the world's population. The populations of Britain, France, Germany, and the United States combined are 506 million—only 39 percent of China's population of 1.3 billion.

In per capita terms China's gross domestic product ranks 109th in the world. There remains a vast disparity between the size, character, and development of the economies of the imperialist countries and that of the Chinese workers state that came into being after the 1949 revolution. This is true despite the sweeping experiment in state capitalism led by the governing bureaucracy in Beijing.

### Stock market bubble

A giant bubble of paper values has been the heart of the "miracle on Wall Street." In January the Dow Jones set another record high.

Between 1995 and 2004 the nominal worldwide value of derivatives—which are bets on the future value of the dollar and other currencies, interest rates, stocks and commodities, among others—more than tripled to over $200 trillion, with more than a third held by U.S. banks. The top five holders among U.S. banks accounted for 94 percent of all U.S. derivatives by the end of the first quarter of 2004, with JP Morgan Chase holding 50 percent. That means one of the largest financial institutions in the country has bet almost $40 trillion on such shaky "futures" markets.

Just prior to the market plunge, the Commerce Department reported that sales of durable goods—factory equipment and other large purchases—fell almost 8 percent in January nationwide.

The next day, the key index of factory output and purchasing in the Chicago area released its figures for February. Its business barometer had fallen to 47.9—the lowest since 2002.

"The nation's manufacturing sector managed to slip into a recession with almost nobody seeming to notice," said

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# MILITANT LABOR FORUMS

## CALIFORNIA

### San Francisco

**The Discussion in Cuba on the Revolution's Cultural Policy.** Speaker: Betsey Stone, Socialist Workers Party. Fri., March 16, 7:30 p.m. *3926 Mission. Tel.: (415) 584-2135.*

## NEW YORK

### Manhattan

**Behind Stock Market's Jitters: Capitalism's Instability and World Disorder.** Speaker: Ma'mud Shirvani. Fri., March 16. Dinner, 7:00 p.m.; program, 8:00 p.m. Donation: $5 dinner, $5 program. *307 W. 36th Street, 10th floor (near corner with 8th Avenue). Tel.: (212) 629-3349.*

# CALENDAR

## NEW YORK

### Manhattan

**Women and the Cuban Revolution Today.** Come hear representatives of the Federation of Cuban Women: Alicia González, Ana Milagros Martínez, and Maritzel González. **Sat., March 10, 7:00 p.m.** Sponsors: Alberto Lovera, Bolivarian Circle, ANSWER coalition, Casa de las Americas, Cuba Solidarity NY, Cuba Solidarity NJ, Communist Party USA, Freedom Socialist Party, Haiti Support Network, International Action Center, Nationalist Party of Puerto Rico (New York branch), Peoples' Organization for Progress, Popular Education Project to Free the Cuban Five, Radical Women, Socialist Workers Party, Workers World Party, Young Socialists. *MLK auditorium, SEIU Local 1199 Building, 310 W. 43rd St. (between 8th and 9th Ave.). Tel. (917) 887-8710.*

**Shooting a Revolution. The Photographs of Lee Lockwood. Cuba: The Early Years.** Exhibit March 8–April 7. Press reception: Wed., March 7, 3:00 p.m. Reception: Thurs., March 8, 6:30 p.m. Sponsored by Center for Cuban Studies. *Cuban Art Space Gallery, 124 West 23rd Street. Tel. (212) 242-0559. For gallery hours visit www.cubanartspace.net*

## ILLINOIS

### Chicago

**Rally for an Immediate Moratorium to Deportations, Raids, and No More "No-Match" Letters! Unconditional Legalization for All! Bring the Troops Home Now!** Sat., March 10, 12:00 noon. *Federal Plaza, corner of Adams and Dearborn.*

## Protests on 4th Anniversary of U.S. Invasion of Iraq

## WASHINGTON, D.C.

**U.S. Out of Iraq Now! March on the Pentagon. Protest the Fourth Anniversary of the U.S. Invasion of Iraq.** Sat., March 17. *Gather at Constitutional Gardens near the Vietnam Memorial at 12:00 noon. For more information, contact ANSWER Coalition at (202) 544-3389.*

## NEW YORK

### Manhattan

**March to End the War.** Sun., March 18. Three days of actions are planned citywide. *For more information on the New York actions and others nationwide, contact United for Peace and Justice at (212) 868-5545.*

## ILLINOIS

### Chicago

**March and Rally to "Stop Funding War and Occupation, Troops Home Now!"** Tues., March 20, 6:00 p.m. Assemble at 25 E. Walton. March down Michigan Avenue. Rally at 8:30 p.m. in Daley Plaza. *Sponsored by M.20 Coalition and others.*

## Presentations of 'Our History Is Still Being Written: The Story of Three Chinese-Cuban Generals in the Cuban Revolution'

## CANADA

### Vancouver

**Sun., March 11, 2:30 p.m.** Speakers: Grace Schenkeveld, cochair, Head Tax Families Society of Canada; Trey Sue-A-Quan, author, *Cane Reapers, Chinese Indentured Immigrants in Guyana*; Sid Tan, chairperson, Chinese Canadian National Council; Mary-Alice Waters, editor, *Our History Is Still Being Written,* president of Pathfinder Press. Sponsors include: Association of Chinese Canadians for Equality and Solidarity Society, Canadian-Cuban Friendship Association, Pathfinder Books, Vancouver and District Labour Council, Vancouver Communities in Solidarity with Cuba. *Vancouver Public Library Alice MacKay Room, Lower Level, 350 W. Georgia St. Tel.: (604) 324-2671.*

**Mon., March 12, 12:00 noon**. Speakers: Alejandra Bronfman, associate professor, Latin American Studies, UBC; Allan Cho, editor-in-chief, Perspectives; Karin Lee, filmmaker; Henry Yu, associate professor, Asian American Studies, UCLA; Eleanor Yen, Head, Asian Library UBC; and Mary-Alice Waters. *Asian Centre Auditorium, 1871 West Mall. Tel.: (604) 324-2671.*

### Montreal

**Sat., March 17, 4:00 p.m.** Speakers: Sam Noumoff, professor emeritus, political science, McGill University; Mary-Alice Waters, editor of *Our History Is Still Being Written*, president of Pathfinder Press**.** Sponsors include Festival Accès Asie and Pathfinder Books. *Montreal Chinese Community and Cultural Center, 1088 Clark St. Tel.: (514) 273-9783.*

### Toronto

**Sun., March 25, 2:00 p.m.** Speakers: Cheuk Kwan, filmmaker; Colleen Hua, president of Chinese Canadian National Council; Laureano Cardoso, Cuban Consulate Toronto; and Mary-Alice Waters. Sponsors include Chinese Canadian National Council, Chinese Canadian National Council Toronto Chapter, The Chinese Magazine at University of Toronto, Free the Cuban Five Committee Toronto, Pathfinder Books. *University of Toronto, Claude T. Bissell Building, Room 205. 140 St. George Street. Tel.: (416) 417-3475, (416) 596-0833 ext. 3. (647) 292-0833.*

# Young Socialists visiting Cuba discuss fight to free Cuban 5

*This column is written and edited by members of the Young Socialists, a revolutionary socialist youth organization. For more information contact the YS at 306 W. 37th St., 10th floor, New York, NY 10018; Tel: (212) 629-6649; E-mail: youngsocialists@mac.com*

## *YOUNG SOCIALISTS IN ACTION*

**BY JACOB PERASSO**

HAVANA—The Cuban Five "are uncompromising revolutionaries, like many Cubans you meet on the street every day, who are willing to give their lives to defend Cuba," said Ernesto Fernández, a national leader of the Union of Young Communists (UJC), to a February 9 meeting of about 100 high school students at the José Martí Polytechnic Institute.

The Cuban Five—Gerardo Hernández, Ramón Labañino, Fernando González, Antonio Guerrero, and René González—are Cubans who were living in Florida to gather information on ultrarightist organizations with a record of violent attacks on Cuba carried out from U.S. soil with Washington's complicity. They have been locked up since 1998, sentenced to long prison terms for "conspiracy to commit espionage" and other frame-up charges.

Fernández, UJC director of international relations, was accompanied by Patricia Flechilla, president of the Federation of Secondary School Students, and by three members of the Young Socialists—Maura DeLuca and Jacob Perasso from the United States and Ólöf Andra Proppé from Iceland. The UJC invited the YS members to participate in a morning of activities at the school, including a meeting that was part of a nationwide effort by the UJC to involve youth in the campaign to free the Cuban Five.

The day's activities began with a morning assembly of 700 students. After performances by a student flamenco dancer and a reggaeton group, the three Young Socialists were asked to say a few words. They explained that YS members around the world defend the Cuban Revolution and have joined the January-April international campaign initiated by Cuban youth organizations on behalf of the Cuban Five.

The students continued discussions in their classrooms, with each of the Young Socialists going to a different one. Students asked questions about the United States and Iceland, and how revolutionaries there carry out their work.

Proppé pointed to some of the realities in imperialist countries, such as the fact that the school system is not designed to educate, but to regiment youth into accepting the system of class exploitation. She pointed to the brutal conditions facing construction workers and many others on the job in Iceland. She also



Militant/Martín Koppel

**Maura DeLuca, Young Socialist from U.S., speaks at José Martí Polytechnic Institute February 9 on campaign to free Cuban Five. Other panelists (from right): Ernesto Fernández, head of international relations of Union of Young Communists; Patricia Flechilla (obscured), president of Federation of Secondary School Students; Jacob Perasso; and Ólöf Andra Proppé.**

described the working-class resistance, such as the massive mobilizations in the United States last year demanding full legalization for all immigrants.

Afterward, DeLuca, Proppé, and Perasso spoke along with Fernández on the Cuban Five before the group of 100 students. If the appeals process for the Five continues at its current pace, Fernández said, it may not be exhausted for at least 24 years. The only way to hasten their freedom is to step up the international campaign of protests, he said.

Fernández noted the conditions the prisoners have been held in, including their initial 17 months of confinement in "the hole" and Washington's repeated denial of visits by family members. He said the refusal of the five Cubans to be broken has won the respect of fellow inmates.

DeLuca said, "We are taking this campaign to student groups, unions, and others to work wherever possible on organizing educational meetings and public demonstrations."

"The Five are on the front lines of the class struggle in the United States. They are doing political work among workers and farmers behind bars," said Perasso. "The capitalist class in the United States hates and fears the example of the Cuban Revolution, and is trying, unsuccessfully, to break the five revolutionaries because of the example they set."

Proppé described how "Young Socialists, from Iceland to Australia to the United States, campaign with the *Militant* at factory gates, colleges, and working-class neighborhoods. Through this work we help bring the truth about the Five to a broader number of workers and students who have never heard of them," she said.

A similar exchange was held the following week with a group of young teachers at a regional vocational school on the outskirts of Havana. One teacher asked whether the Young Socialists integrated defense of the Cuban Five with defense of the Cuban Revolution.

"For youth who are open to revolutionary ideas, these five militants can show what the Cuban Revolution is all about," Perasso replied. "But to defend the Cuban Five, it is essential that we reach out as broadly as possible, among all those who will take a stand against the injustices being done to them."

# *Conference in Connecticut protests raids by immigration, demands release of those arrested*

**BY TIM CRAINE**

DANBURY, Connecticut—A February 25 forum at Western Connecticut State University (WCSU) here featured workers and others fighting back against recent immigration raids. The event was sponsored by the WCSU Latin American Student Organization, a Danbury-based coalition called Stop The Raids, the Western Connecticut Central Labor Council, and the Graduate Employees Student Organization at Yale University.

Among the several hundred people at the rally were local day laborers fighting deportation. On September 19, 11 workers originally from Ecuador were arrested in a sting operation by Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) agents and taken to Boston.

According to a defense committee statement, seven were later sent to a prison in Texas. Their family members were denied information on the arrests and the whereabouts of their relatives. A campaign to free the workers resulted in nine being released on bail. These nine have since spoken to unionists, students, and others to win support for their case, recounting the arbitrary and brutal treatment meted out to them and other immigrants by ICE.

The meeting's featured speakers were two meat packers from the Swift plant in Hyrum, Utah, one of six nationwide raided by ICE on December 12. Hundreds of Swift workers were arrested during the raids, and dozens of them were charged with "identity theft."

Anabel Pimentel, a worker originally from Mexico who has lived in the United States for 18 years, described workers' anger and shock as they watched friends and relatives rounded up in the plant and carted off in handcuffs. Pimentel was left to care for her in-laws' two-year-old child after both parents were arrested. Both remain in custody.

Rosa López, who is originally from El Salvador and has lived in the United States for 19 years, spoke about how her niece was arrested during the plant raid. ICE agents also arrested López's daughter-in-law at her home that morning. López told how she and other workers at the plant got information about the families of the arrested workers before they were hauled off so that they could organize care for the children left behind.

Rejecting the charge that packinghouse workers were engaged in "identify theft," López demanded that those in detention be released and given their legal right to work. She concluded by saying, "Stop the raids! We are not criminals!"

Eddy Acosta, coordinator for the national partnership between the AFL-CIO and National Day Laborer Organizing Network, spoke on the importance of labor supporting immigrant rights, pointing out that the raids benefit the employers by instilling fear in all workers.

Juan Garcia, of the Puerto Rican Legal Defense and Education Fund, addressed the legal fight in Hazelton, Pennsylvania, where the town's mayor made national news with a proposal for an onerous anti-immigrant ordinance.

The rally took place without incident, despite a picket line of 50 anti-immigrant protesters outside.

# 51 arrested in 'migra' raid at UPS warehouses near Seattle

**BY JOHN NAUBERT AND EDWIN FRUIT**

SEATTLE—Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) agents raided the large UPS warehouse facilities in Auburn, Washington, near Seattle February 14. The ICE cops arrested 51 workers on charges of possible discrepancies in their Social Security numbers. The workers are being held at the Northwest Detention Center in Tacoma, Washington.

The majority of the workers grabbed were temporary laborers. Forty-four are from Mexico, four from Guatemala, and three from El Salvador.

The two targeted warehouses are used to store imported goods. According the *Seattle Post-Intelligencer*, ICE agents said they consider such warehouses critical buildings—like airports and military bases—because workers with access to these sites are vulnerable to exploitation by "terrorists" and other criminals.

"When individuals use fraudulent or false documents to gain employment, they hide their true identity and history," said Michael McCool, deputy special agent in charge of the Seattle ICE office of investigations. "Those false identities pose a potential threat to the nation's commercial infrastructure," he stated.

At a news conference the day after the raid, immigrant rights activists and local religious leaders said they would launch a program to offer sanctuary to undocumented immigrants fleeing such raids.

A February 25 meeting at the St. Matthews Episcopal Church in Auburn appealed for assistance for those still jailed in Tacoma. Dianne Aid, who works with the Jubilee Center at the church, said the church is organizing donations of goods and money for legal aid for the imprisoned workers.

Among those attending the gathering was Erica, one of the workers arrested at the UPS warehouse. Her last name is not being disclosed to protect her from further victimization by the government. Erica unloaded trucks at the facility and had been working there for 20 months. She described what happened as ICE agents rounded up the workers and took them in closed vans to Tacoma. Erica also commented on the inhuman conditions at the facility, including the inadequate meals. Those arrested had been told that those who have children would be released on their own recognizance. However, ICE agents did not believe Erica when she explained she had two children, a two-year-old and a four-month-old. Erica was released a week later in response to pressure from community organizations. Her court hearing is scheduled for March 3.

"What happened was not right," Erica said. "We come here to work. We are not criminals."

Also attending the meeting were members of the Committee for General Amnesty and Social Justice. Its representatives announced they are planning an action in Seattle May 1 to demand "Stop the ICE Raids! Stop the Deportations!"

Meeting participants donated $700 to help the arrested workers and their families.

## ON THE PICKET LINE

### *Airbus workers in France and Germany protest mass job cuts*

Thousands of Airbus workers in France and Germany halted production March 1 to protest massive job cuts recently announced by the company. Work stoppages occurred at plant sites in Méaulte, France, and in Nordenham, Varel, and Laupheim, Germany, reported the Associated Press.

The day before nearly 14,000 workers at four plants in France halted work for two hours, union officials told the media.

Airbus plans to slash 10,000 jobs—nearly 20 percent of its workforce—and sell as many as six factories over the next three to four years.

Job cuts will include 4,300 in France, 3,700 in Germany, 1,600 in the United Kingdom, and 400 in Spain.

Some 10,000 Airbus workers and others rallied in Toulouse, France, March 6 to protest the planned layoffs. A Europe-wide action is being organized for mid-March.

*—Brian Williams*


Militant/Eddie Beck

**Members of Teamsters Local 202 at Royal Aluminum, in Newark, New Jersey, picket outside the plant March 1.**

### *Teamsters fight lockout at Royal Aluminum plant in New Jersey*

NEWARK, New Jersey—Some 60 workers at the Royal Aluminum plant here are fighting against a company lockout imposed during negotiations for a new contract. The workers are members of Teamsters Local 202. The majority are women of Latino and Portuguese descent. The company, which manufactures specialty windows, offered an hourly wage raise of just 20 cents per year over a five-year contract, according Teamster representative Anthony Rosa. The unionists are also demanding improved health-care benefits. With the imposition of the lockout, the company halted all negotiations.

*—Carole Lesnick*

### *Canada rail workers end strike, vote on one-year contract*

Under the threat of strikebreaking legislation by the federal government, 2,800 conductors and yard workers returned to work on the Canadian National (CN) railway March 1 after striking against worsening job conditions. The strike, which began February 10, paralyzed sections of the economy, causing layoffs, plant shutdowns, and a backlog of ships in ports waiting for shipments for transport.

The workers are voting on a one-year pact reached between United Transportation Union officials and CN bosses, with results to be announced March 26. The agreement provides for a 3 percent wage increase, but does not address any of the work rule issues that were of most concern to the strikers, who walked out over the "productivity" drive of the CN bosses. Discussions on these issues will begin next fall. Federal Labour Minister Jean-Pierre Blackburn has warned that the government might still use the legislation if the workers don't approve the deal.

*—John Steele*

# Gary Tyler, framed up in 1974 desegregation fight, still in jail

**BY SAM MANUEL**

WASHINGTON—One of the ongoing travesties of justice by the U.S. government against working people, especially those who are Black, is the now 32-year imprisonment of Gary Tyler. At age 16, Tyler, who is Black, was framed-up, arrested, tried, and convicted by an all-white jury in Destrehan, Louisiana, for the death of a 13-year-old white student, Timothy Weber.

Weber was fatally shot while standing near a mob that attacked Black students being bussed into Destrehan High School as part of a desegregation program.

Tyler became the youngest U.S. inmate on death row. In 1975 the U.S. Supreme Court ruled Louisiana's death penalty unconstitutional. The following year Tyler's sentence to die by the electric chair was commuted to life imprisonment without the option of parole. He will turn 50 this year in the state penitentiary in Angola, Louisiana.

Amnesty International renewed its call to Louisiana's governor to pardon Tyler February 12.

*New York Times* columnist Bob Herbert wrote a series of articles on the case at the beginning of February. He noted that despite the complete lack of credible evidence that Tyler fired the fatal shot, a ruling by a federal appeals court that the trial judge's instructions to the jury were "unconstitutional," and two recommendations by the Louisiana Board of Pardons that could have lead to Tyler's release, he remains behind bars.

The Ku Klux Klan and other racist outfits played a leading role in opposing school desegregation in Louisiana. On Oct. 7, 1974, students at Destrehan High were sent home early as a result of clashes between Black and white students. A mob of 200 whites throwing stones and bottles attacked the bus carrying Black students as it attempted to leave. A shot rang out. Weber fell to the ground and died a few hours later.

Around seven cops searched the bus on two occasions for more than three hours. No gun was found in the bus or on the Black students, who were also searched either on the spot or at the police station. The bus driver insisted that the shot came from someone firing at the bus.

Tyler was arrested by deputy Nelson Coleman, one of the few Black sheriff's deputies in St. Charles Parish, for "disturbing the peace" after he complained about police harassment of a fellow Black student. When asked at the trial whose peace Tyler had disturbed, Coleman replied, "Mine."

Cops severely beat Tyler at the police station in an effort to force him to confess to the shooting. He refused.

During the trial, the prosecution's primary evidence was the testimony of Nathalie Blanks, who said she saw Tyler fire the gun. She claimed he hid the weapon by slitting open a bus seat and placing it inside. Blanks was under the care of a psychiatrist at the time and had a history of falsely reporting crimes. She later recanted her testimony, as did several other students who said cops had coerced them into giving statements identifying Tyler as the shooter.

During the initial search of the bus cops had shaken and turned upside down the seat described by Blanks. No gun was found. After Blanks's testimony, the cops said they found a .45 automatic in the seat.

The gun had been stolen from a police firing range used by the very cops who arrested Tyler and were investigating the case. No fingerprints were found on the gun, and it was not tested to see if it had been recently fired. Nor was it tested to determine if the bullet that killed Weber could have been fired from the gun. The gun has since mysteriously disappeared.

Tyler was represented by a white lawyer with no experience in criminal cases, let alone a death penalty trial. The public defender spent a total of one hour with his client during the year prior to the trial, did not interview witnesses, and did not have any tests conducted on the prosecution's physical evidence. His failure to challenge the trial judge's unconstitutional instructions to the jury contributed to Tyler's loss on appeal.

In 1980 the U.S. Court of Appeals, Fifth Circuit, vacated Tyler's conviction and ordered a retrial on the grounds that the judge's instructions to the jury to find that Tyler had "intended the natural and probable consequences of his act" made the trial "fundamentally unfair." The state appealed the ruling, and, in 1981, the same court reversed its own order for a new trial. It maintained, however, that the judge's instructions to the jury were unconstitutional. The Supreme Court declined to hear the case on appeal.

In 1989 Tyler petitioned the Louisiana Board of Pardons. The board vote 3-2 to recommend to then governor. Charles Roemer, a Democrat, that Tyler's sentence be reduced to 60 years. That would have made him eligible for parole after serving a third of the sentence, 20 years. Roemer rejected the recommendation.

In 1991 Tyler appealed to the board for clemency. The board voted unanimously to recommend that Roemer reduce Tyler's sentence to 50 years and restore a benefit for good behavior, thus making Tyler immediately eligible for parole. Roemer denied the request shortly before leaving office.

## 25, 50, AND 75 YEARS AGO

25 CENTS

THE MILITANT

A SOCIALIST NEWSWEEKLY/PUBLISHED IN THE INTERESTS OF THE WORKING PEOPLE

**March 19, 1982**

In response to the growing strength of left-wing guerrillas in Guatemala, the Reagan administration has asked Congress to appropriate funds for military aid to that country. Aid to the Guatemalan military regime was suspended in 1977 because of public outcries over its gross human rights violations.

In a February 27 interview in the *Washington Post*, Secretary of State Alexander Haig charged that Guatemala is "clearly the next target" of communist insurgency in Central America, and he stated that it "soon will be a parallel case to El Salvador."

As the *Militant* went to press, evidence was mounting of a massive election fraud in Guatemala to favor the dictatorship's hand-picked candidate, General Aníbal Guevara.

THE MILITANT

PUBLISHED IN THE INTERESTS OF THE WORKING PEOPLE

NEW YORK, N.Y. FIVE (5) CENTS

**March 18, 1957**

The chamber in the federal courthouse at Foley Square where a House Un-American Activities subcommittee is now holding hearings is freshly painted and decorated but a foul witch-hunt odor prevails. The committee opened a four-day session here yesterday ostensibly to investigate "mounting communist propaganda." In an opening statement, sub-committee chairman Moulder (D-Mo.) asserted that the committee's aim is to help strengthen laws designed to combat foreign and domestic "subversive" literature.

The committee devoted itself to smearing foreign-born workers as a dangerous potential for "subversion" and attempted to establish the idea that opposition to the Eisenhower Doctrine in the Middle East is equivalent to advocating force and violence.

THE MILITANT

Weekly Organ of the Communist League of America [Opposition]

**March 19, 1932**

Last Sunday's presidential elections in Germany were breathlessly watched by a world torn by economic crisis and apprehensive of social convulsions.

To be sure, Hitler only rallied 11,500,000 votes to Hindenburg's 18,000,000.

But when we consider that the Fascist gain amounted to some 5,000,000 votes more than the 6,400,000 they received in the Reichstag elections in 1930, and when we look at this fact objectively, dispassionately, we cannot fail to come to the conclusion that the elections reflected a tremendous and absolutely menacing advance on part of the Fascists.

The menace of Fascism hangs more heavily over the head of the German working class than ever.

# An exchange with workers at Havana garment plants



Militant/Jonathan Silberman

**Workers at Antonio Maceo suit factory in Havana. María Eugenia Arnet (in middle) and others exchanged experiences with workers from United States, Australia, and Britain.**

**BY MAURA DELUCA**

HAVANA—Five workers from the United States, Australia, and the United Kingdom, who were in Cuba for the annual international book fair, visited two garment plants here February 19: the Antonio Maceo suit factory and Thaba Specialties, which makes leather bags and hats. Luis Guillén, a member of the national secretariat of the union of light industry workers (SNTIL), took several hours of his time to accompany us.

## AS I SEE IT

As a sewing machine operator in New York City, I was interested to see firsthand the difference a socialist revolution makes in workers' daily lives. I was struck by the contrast in social relations. In a capitalist country like the United States, the basic condition of workers is one of competition between us—for jobs, housing, and so on. "Look after number one" is advice we often hear. But in Cuba the prevailing atmosphere is one of solidarity. Where workers tend to look out for one another and to cooperate to advance their revolution.

When a boss in a capitalist country talks about efficiency or "team work," we reach for our pocketbooks. Our interests are counterposed to those of the boss. In Cuba that changed with the revolution. The value that workers produce does not end up in the pockets of a capitalist. It goes toward workers' social benefits, investments in the industry, or other needs of society.

It was striking to see the influence workers have on conditions at the suit factory and the leather shop, and the way they are involved in discussions on broader economic and social questions. As a result, whatever their criticisms—which they readily voice, such as the need to improve public transportation—workers' morale was high and many expressed confidence about the future. This mood was consistent with three previous visits to the suit factory in recent years by socialist workers from the United States and other countries.

There are 144 workers at the suit factory and 40 at the leather shop. They hold monthly union assemblies to discuss how to improve conditions and increase efficiency. The manager gives regular reports for workers to assess results.

The pace of work was humane, especially compared to what I have experienced in factories in New York. At the Antonio Maceo factory, a brigade of 15 sewing machine operators makes around 250–300 pieces a day. At Thaba each worker makes an average of about eight bags a day.

In a factory in Brooklyn where I once went for a job, I made 30 pairs of shorts per hour for a few hours, but was told I needed to make 65–70 pairs of shorts an hour—just to earn the minimum hourly wage!

Workers welcomed our visit, taking a break for 20 minutes or so to share experiences and ask about struggles of workers abroad, even though this cut into their results-based pay (production bonuses are added to their basic wage).

Mercedes Martínez, 35, a sewing machine operator at the suit factory for three years, told me, "In Cuba we workers have our rights. We can take breaks for something like this, or to smoke or go to the bathroom when we need to."

In the plant where I work, any meetings, whether union- or company-organized, must take place during our 30-minute break—the only time we have to eat, have coffee or a cigarette, relax, talk, make phone calls, and clean up.

In the United States most sewers know that any training you get is from coworkers, often when your boss is not looking. Thaba manager Zaily Pons Machado told us that not only do they train inexperienced workers from scratch, but experienced sewers get three days to learn new operations.

Pons Machado, 36, said, "We always defend the rights of workers. If something happens that is out of the workers' hands, like an electrical outage or materials shortage, workers still get paid."

Suit factory manager Miguel Tamayo noted that workers accumulate paid vacation time by 15 days every 5.5 months. One vacation is taken during the factory shutdown in July, and the second is rotated by brigade.

In my experience, when a capitalist garment shop shuts down, workers are on their own to try to collect unemployment pay. Often they end up receiving no compensation.

SNTIL leader Luis Guillén pointed out that women workers in Cuba receive a one-year paid maternity leave, at the end of which their job is guaranteed.

Safety is a big worry for workers in the United States, under pressure by bosses to work faster. In the last six months, two of my coworkers have been injured but took little or no time off, knowing they would not be paid.

The Cuban workers could not fathom such conditions. Miguel Leal Alfonso, 38, a packager in the suit factory for 21 years, noted that in the rare case of an accident, there is a free clinic nearby, and workers are paid for work missed due to injury.

You sometimes read in the capitalist press that Cuban workers earn $10 per month. María Eugenia Arnet, a presser at the suit factory, showed us her January pay slip, for the equivalent of $70. But such figures don't tell the real story. While Cuba is a Third World country, many things we must pay dearly for—health, education, and other essentials—are free in Cuba. Rent is limited to 10 percent of household income. It costs the equivalent of 8 cents to go to the movies. And Leal Alfonso said a hot lunch is offered in the plant cafeteria for the equivalent of 2 cents.

"We don't get a big wage, but we live well and we're united," Leal Alfonso said. "We live in peace, and with dignity."

# *Italian Stalinists prop up bourgeois gov't to 'stop right'*

**BY BRIAN WILLIAMS**

March 3—Italy's two main Stalinist parties—Communist Refoundation and the Italian Communist Party—propped up over the last several days the country's capitalist government headed by Prime Minister Romano Prodi under the banner of staving off the "return of the right." Prodi's administration was about to fall after losing a vote in the Senate on its proposal to keep Rome's troops as part of the U.S.-led coalition occupying Afghanistan.

Prodi's coalition defeated Forza Italia, a rightist party led by Silvio Berlusconi, last April in one of Italy's closest elections. Berlusconi was prime minister from 2001 to 2006. His cabinet included the fascist-oriented Northern League.

During his first nine months in office, Prodi reaffirmed the deployment of Italian troops to Afghanistan as part of the NATO forces there, initiated by Berlusconi's regime.

A February 21 vote in the Senate on a government-backed resolution to keep the nearly 2,000 Italian troops in Afghanistan led to a political crisis for the Prodi regime. The resolution also called for backing Washington's request to double the size of the U.S. military base in Vicenza, Italy, where the entire U.S. 173rd Airborne Brigade would be based.

Among those voting against the Prodi-backed resolution were Franco Turigliatto of the Communist Refoundation Party (PRC) and Fernando Rossi of the Italian Communist Party. Both groups are part of a nine-party coalition led by Prodi's Christian Democrats and other capitalist parties. The two senators actually abstained, but Senate rules translate that to a "no" vote.

The resolution failed to win a majority by two votes. In response, Prodi submitted his resignation that evening.

The leadership of the two Stalinist parties acted swiftly to keep Prodi's regime in office. "The government must continue," said Franco Giordano, a leader of the PRC, in response to a call by the Northern League for Prodi to resign.

Two days after the Senate vote the PRC expelled Turigliatto from the group for what party leaders described as "a breach that could not be healed," reported the *New York Times*. "We reaffirm our faith in the prime minister," the party said in a statement, "and confirm a loyal and effective collaboration."

A declaration issued by Fabio Amato, head of the PRC's International Department, elaborated on the importance the Stalinist party places on backing the governing coalition. "The gravity of what has happened at the Senate," it said, is "in having caused a shift in the political line of the Party using his [Turigliatto's] privileged position as an MP [Member of Parliament]. Other senators of the PRC spoke in the chamber declaring their dissent but then they voted for the motion, as it was decided."

Within days, Prodi was back in charge of the government. Italian president Giorgio Napolitano rejected his resignation, asking him instead to win a majority in a vote of confidence in both houses of parliament. On February 28, he succeeded in the Senate in a 162 to 157 vote. The following day the lower house voted to back Prodi by 342 to 253.

The political course of Italy's Stalinist parties is similar to that of the French Communist Party and most of the middle-class left in the French elections five years earlier.

In the first round of voting there in 2002 ultrarightist candidate Jean-Marie Le Pen edged out Socialist Party leader Lionel Jospin. Le Pen now faced President

**Continued on page 7**



## Contribute to cover costs of 'Militant' reporting team to Cuba

A team of *Militant* reporters was in Cuba during most of February to cover the 16th International Book Fair taking place in Havana and other Cuban cities, as well as other political developments in the country.

The trip's costs exceeded $12,000. Contributions from readers to help defray such costs add up to $1,355 as this issue goes to press.

Please donate generously to help the *Militant* pay for the trip and continue fielding similar international reporting teams. Earmark checks or money orders "Havana book fair travel fund," and send your contribution to the *Militant* at 306 W. 37th St., 10th floor, New York, NY 10018.

# New draft Iraqi oil law has many opponents

**BY SAM MANUEL**

WASHINGTON, March 3—A draft oil law approved by Iraq's cabinet February 27 leaves many questions unsettled, including the status of the oil-rich northern city of Kirkuk, claimed by Kurds as part of their autonomous region. The Kurdish Regional Government is pressing for a referendum at the end of the year to incorporate Kirkuk into Iraqi Kurdistan.

Some capitalist politicians from Sunni- and Shiite-led factions have said they will try to block passage of the law in the Iraqi parliament. The head of Iraq's Federation of Oil Unions opposes the law on the grounds that it opens up the country's vast oil and gas reserves to extensive foreign investment.

The draft law empowers the central government to distribute oil revenues to Iraq's 18 provinces based on population. Washington has pressed Baghdad for a new oil law along these lines to draw wealthy Sunnis and other Iraqi capitalists into establishing a stable regime friendly to U.S. interests in the Middle East. Iraq's largest oil fields are located in the Kurdish-populated north and Shiite-populated south. Wealthy Sunnis, who dominated the government under Saddam Hussein, have been fighting to ensure a good portion of the oil riches will remain theirs.

U.S. ambassador to Iraq Zalmay Khalilzad spent weeks in intense negotiations to reach a compromise with Kurdish regional government officials, who have clashed with Baghdad in the last year over signing contracts with foreign oil companies and collecting revenues. The deal reached allows the Kurdish and other regional governments to negotiate and sign such contracts, which will now have to be reviewed by Baghdad.

Saleh al-Mutlaq, leader of the Sunni-led National Dialogue Front, said his group opposes the draft oil law. "It divides the country and the wealth into groups," he said. Wealthy Sunnis also argue that distribution of oil revenues based on population would be unfair because there is no accurate census of Iraq's population. These capitalist politicians reject claims that Sunnis are a minority. Sunni Arabs are generally estimated to be 20 percent of Iraq's population, Kurds 20 percent, and Shiite Arabs 60 percent.

The draft law opens the way for foreign oil companies to plunder Iraq's oil, which was nationalized in 1972. In return for their investments, foreign companies would be able to sign long-term contracts at favorable terms. These include exporting oil after paying a minimum 12.5 percent royalty, substantial tax breaks, and keeping 20 percent of profits. In other oil-producing countries in the region foreign companies are allowed to keep 10 percent of profits.

"We want a new, different law, which will be in the interests of Iraqis," Hassan Jum'ah Awwad al-Asadi, head of the Federation of Oil Unions, told *Time* magazine. "If there is no solution we can stop production, stop exports."



**Kurdish official speaks at Nov. 29, 2005, ceremony at Zakho, northern Iraq, to mark first drilling for oil by a foreign oil company in the country since the 2003 U.S.-led invasion of Iraq.**

# Thousands of Chinese protest

**Continued from front page**

other local Asian American groups to respond to the allegations. Protesters said the Channel 11 report perpetuated racist prejudices and derogatory stereotypes against Chinese.

"This is not the first time that CW11 has engaged in this kind of story," New York City councilman John Liu told the *Village Voice*. He pointed to an unsubstantiated story aired by the station in 2001 about a Korean restaurant serving dog meat. A lawsuit against the TV station was dropped two years later after Channel 11 issued an apology.

The owners of New Food King restaurant have filed a lawsuit against CW11, its parent company, the Tribune Company, reporter Chris Glorioso, and anchor Kaity Tong. The suit charges defamation and slander, and asks for $2 million in damages and legal costs.

Attorney John Yong, who is representing the restaurant in the suit, told the media that since CW11 aired its first story the restaurant has received dozens of racist phone calls from people ordering mouse meat and telling the owners to "go back to China."

"The Chinese community in the United States used to be a silent minority, but this time it is out shouting," said John Du, a member of the U.S.-China Lawyers Society. "I think it is very good."

# Afghanistan

**Continued from front page**

Gul, 38, told AP, "and they even opened fire on 14 or 15 vehicles passing on the highway. They opened fire on everybody, the ones inside the vehicles and the ones on foot." Gul said he was standing on the roadside near a gas station and was shot twice in his right hand.

"When we parked our vehicle, when they passed us, they opened fire on our vehicle," said Mohammad Ishaq, 15, who was reportedly hit by two bullets, in the left arm and right ear. "It was a convoy of three American Humvees. All three Humvees were firing around."

Pictures of one of these vehicles riddled with dozens of bullets taken by AP freelance photographer Rahmat Gul were confiscated by U.S. soldiers on the scene. Inside this car were three dead bodies and a wounded 20-year-old, AP reported.

There are 27,000 U.S. troops in Afghanistan, 15,000 of whom are under NATO command. The rest of the U.S. forces there, some 12,000 troops, conduct operations separate from the 35,000-strong NATO force occupying the country.

According to Human Rights Watch, NATO and other U.S.-led assaults killed more than 100 Afghan civilians in 2006. AP reported the civilian death toll was 834, claiming many were from attacks by Taliban-backed forces.

The news agency Deutsche Press-Agentur, however, reported that Noorulhaq Olomi, chairman of the Defense Committee of the Afghan parliament, said that a more accurate figure is 3,000 civilians killed last year, many from U.S.-led airstrikes.

# 7,000 more U.S. troops to be deployed to Iraq

**Continued from front page**

nearly 159,000.

The escalation includes a broader use of airpower, according to the U.S. military. In the first week of March, two precision-guided bombs destroyed an alleged car bomb factory and another airstrike killed at least seven people allegedly firing at U.S. troops. More U.S. fighter jets are flying closer to troops on the ground, Lt. Col. Christopher Garver, a U.S. military spokesman in Baghdad, told the press March 3.

The following day a combined force of 1,100 U.S. troops and Iraqi police began a push into Sadr City, a working-class district of Baghdad, which has been a center of operations by the Mahdi Army, a Shiite militia headed by Muqtada al-Sadr. The Mahdi militia has been a special target of a U.S.-led crackdown in the city against armed groups loyal to Shiite and Sunni capitalists vying for dominance of the Iraqi government.

In a similar offensive, a March 4 raid by British and Iraqi government forces on the offices of an Iraqi intelligence agency in Basra found 30 prisoners, some of whom showed signs of torture. It was the latest instance in which Iraqi government operatives have been implicated in the torture of prisoners.

U.S. deputy defense secretary Gordon England disclosed the dispatching of the additional 7,000 support groups at a March 1 Senate Budget Committee hearing.

Army spokesman Lt. Col. Carl Ey said 10,000 troops that are part of the escalation are already in Iraq, according to an article in the March 12 issue of the *Army Times*. In all there are about 140,000 U.S. troops now in Iraq.

Democrats and Republicans on the Senate Budget Committee expressed no opposition to the deployment of up to 29,000 more troops; some only expressed reservations at the estimated cost involved. The Congressional Budget Office has said the real cost of the escalation will be around $20 billion while the Pentagon and Bush administration put it at $5.6 billion. "Put me down as a skeptic on the $5.6 billion," said Senate Budget Committee chairman Kent Conrad, a Democrat from North Dakota.

U.S. and Iraqi government troops have begun house-to-house searches in Sadr City and are converting a police station into an operations center, according to the Associated Press. They have met no resistance from the Mahdi militia, the result of an apparent deal between al-Sadr and the government, according to the private U.S. intelligence outfit Strategic Forecasting.

In an indication that knowledge about torture of prisoners reaches the highest levels of the government, Iraqi prime minister Nouri al-Maliki condemned the raid on the government intelligence office in Basra and promised to "punish those who have carried out this illegal and irresponsible act."

A similar raid on a police station in Basra last December found 127 prisoners, some of whom also had been tortured. Last year U.S. and Iraqi troops found a secret Interior Ministry prison where some of its 1,400 inmates had been subjected to systematic torture and abuse.

Meanwhile, the bloodletting caused by factions of the Iraqi capitalist class fighting over the country's resources continues. More than 150 Iraqi civilians were killed in attacks in southern Baghdad today and by two car bombings around Karbala yesterday that targeted Shiite pilgrims going there for a religious ceremony.

# Italian Stalinists

**Continued from page 6**

Jacques Chirac of the capitalist Gaullist party. The French CP, Socialist Party, the Greens, and much of the left urged people to "hold their nose but vote Chirac" in order to "build a dam against fascism."

Chirac won that election, ensuring continuity in Paris's offensive against working people at home and abroad, with the backing of "workers'" parties. The Stalinists in Italy just gave the ruling class there a hand in doing the same.

# Peace rallies in N.Y., Washington

**Continued from front page**

wars in Iraq and beyond.

"How many times have you sat in front of the TV over the last four years, watching anti-war activists march on Washington, chase the ROTC off your local college campus, vandalize war memorials, insult the troops and wreak havoc under the surrender banner?" said the column. "Here is the answer: Get off the sofa and join the Gathering of Eagles on March 17 in Washington."

Noting that tens of thousands marched January 27 there to protest the U.S.-led war in Iraq, Malkin said only 40 people turned out to "counter the Far Left." Violence-baiting the peace protesters, she said the "Gathering of Eagles to March for America" will protect national monuments from vandalism this time.

The ANSWER coalition issued a statement responding to the provocation, saying the rightist groups involved are "callously trying to manipulate Vietnam veterans by spreading rumors" that the antiwar march will defile the Vietnam Memorial.

For more information on the peace rallies, contact the YS at youngsocialists@mac.com, or 306 W. 37th St., 10th floor, New York, NY 10018, (212) 629-6649; local *Militant* distributors (see directory on page 8); ANSWER at answercoalition.org, (202) 544-3389; or UFPJ at unitedforpeace.org, (212) 868-5545.

# Women and labor's fight for industrial unions

*Below are excerpts* from Labor's Giant Step*, one of Pathfinder's Books of the Month for March. In its pages the story of the explosive labor struggles and political battles in the 1930s that built the industrial unions is told by participant Art Preis. The book describes how those unions became the vanguard of a mass social movement that began transforming U.S. society by reaching out to the whole working class, including women who contributed greatly to those struggles. The first excerpt describes the May 1934 strike by Teamsters Local 574 in Minneapolis. The second is about the 1937 sit-down strikes by auto workers in Flint, Michigan. The third draws lessons from these strikes. Copyright © 1972 by Pathfinder Press. Reprinted by permission.*



Minnesota Historical Society

**Members of Teamsters Local 574 Women's Auxiliary running the commissary in 1934. Its members also staffed the strike hospital that treated wounded pickets, and organized speaking trips all over the region to win support for the strike.**

## BOOKS OF THE MONTH

**BY ART PREIS**

The Local 574 leaders warned the membership over and over to place no reliance or hope in any government agents or agencies, including Floyd B. Olsen, the Farmer-Labor Party governor, and the National Labor Board. They preached reliance only on the mass picket lines and militant struggle against the employers.

From the start, the strike leaders summoned the whole working-class populace to their support. The very active unemployed organization responded at once. A 574 Women's Auxiliary, with a large membership, plunged into the strike, doing everything from secretarial work and mimeographing, to running the huge strike kitchen and manning picket trucks.

Some 700 of them marched in a mass demonstration to the Mayor's office to demand the withdrawal of the "special" police. The march was led by Mrs. Grant Dunne, auxiliary president, and Mrs. Farrell Dobbs, auxiliary secretary and wife of a young coal driver who was a strike picket dispatcher. A decade later Farrell Dobbs became editor of *The Militant* and then national secretary of the Socialist Workers Party. . . .

❖

The strikers moved on February 1 to occupy a still more strategic plant, Chevrolet No. 4 where the Chevrolet motors were assembled—a real bottleneck. The leader of the Chevrolet unionists was Kermit Johnson, a militant left-wing Socialist. Chevrolet No. 4 had not been shut down, as it was not certain whether the union had sufficient strength in the plant. A bold stratagem was devised to capture the plant by reinforcements from the outside.

A diversion was created. Several thousand strikers marched to Chevrolet Plant No. 9 from the union headquarters. They were led by Roy Reuther and Powers Hapgood. GM informers, as had been expected, had tipped off management about the march on No. 9. Armed Flint detectives and company guards had been installed in the plant. The workers inside began yelling "sit-down!" and a forty-minute battle was waged inside the plant. The Women's Emergency Brigade, organized and led by Genora Johnson (now Dollinger), fought heroically on the outside, smashing the windows to permit the tear gas to escape from the plant.

During this diversion, a group of Chevrolet No. 4 men, with some squads from Chevrolet No. 6, marched boldly into the No. 4 plant, shut down operations, barricaded doors and gates and set up patrols. Steel gondolas, weighing hundreds of pounds apiece, were piled against doors and windows from floor to ceiling. That night, troops with bayonets marched ominously outside—but Murphy did not dare give an order to attack. . . .

❖

All the schemes of the employers to divide the workers and smash their strikes failed. During the postwar strike wave in 1919, the employers had brought thousands of unwary Negro workers from the South to use as scab labor. The end of World War II, however, found 1,600,000 Negro workers in unions, primarily in steel, coal, automobiles and meat packing. A third of the delegates to the CIO United Packinghouse Workers convention were Negroes, and hundreds of thousands of Negro militants bolstered the picket lines.

The use of women, particularly the wives of strikers, to start back-to-work movements and break the morale of the strikers proved a fiasco after World War II. Millions of women had been brought into industry during the war. A high percentage of them were married women forced to work to make ends meet. In the first eight months after V-J Day, according to the report of the Women's Bureau of the U. S. Department of Labor, some four million women were dropped from the labor force. They had no love for the employers. Not only did women strikers and strikers' wives help man the picket lines and run the soup kitchens in all the major strikes, but in a series of strikes the miserably exploited telephone operators were to force the powerful American Telephone and Telegraph Company trust to deal with their unions.

Two misguided wives in Flint called a meeting of over 300 women to start a back-to-work movement in GM. But after a discussion of the issues, the meeting sent a telegram to Truman demanding he make GM bargain in good faith with the union. Part of the meeting collection was turned over to the strike fund and the two who had called the meeting volunteered for strike kitchen duty.



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## EDITORIAL

# Wall Street's capitalist greed

The 1987 stock market crash foretold that the world capitalist system was headed into a prolonged period of economic depression and military assaults. History will recognize that we've entered its opening stages 20 years later. The reasons for the '87 crash are also behind Wall Street's recent tremor.

The crisis underlying the stock market's occasional drops is also the one driving the imperialist masters to growing competition among themselves for domination of the world's markets and resources, to brutal wars abroad, and to unrelenting assaults on the living and job conditions of working people at home. This crisis is not conjunctural. It is rooted in the economic downturn that began about 30 years ago with the exhaustion of the economic boom that grew out of the preparations for World War II.

Since the late 1960s, the average rate of industrial profit has been sliding downward. That has made productive investments—such as building factories, mines, and mills, expanding services, or acquiring capacity-increasing equipment—less profitable for capitalists.

Instead, the superwealthy families that own industry, most land, and financial institutions largely favor gambling on Wall Street and other stock markets.

The reason for such unchecked speculation is greed, which, under capitalism—a truly dog-eat-dog system—is not a character flaw, much less an attitude alien to business. Greed is inherent to capitalist competition.

Driven inexorably by the necessity to compete or die, capitalists, without exception, act pragmatically—on the basis that what has been happening will continue to happen. They seek to maximize profits by moving in directions that currently bring the highest returns.

Today the propertied families of finance capital, and their hired circles of managers, politicians, technicians, academics, and professionals are incapable of believing what's happening to the mountains of paper values they've piled up recently. What seemed like free money over the past two decades for the well-healed has today inflated bubbles of debt that will bring down major banks, brokerage firms, insurance companies, pension and health trusts, and industrial and commercial corporations. The recent spike in bankruptcies of major U.S. mortgage firms is a case in point.

At the same time, we have to recognize that the price gyrations of capitalism's "paper economy" do not affect only speculators, or middle-class professionals and others who play the markets. The trading in stocks and bonds is inseparable from the production and circulation of commodities. A Wall Street bust will have a ruinous impact on the toilers, the vast majority, too.

The only effective way to counter capitalism's unnerving instability registered in the stock market's recent blip is to build a communist movement that can lead working people to make a revolution, take power out of the hands of the profiteers, and join the worldwide struggle to build a society based on human solidarity—one that will surely abolish the stock market and return to humanity the wealth stolen by the Wall Street gamblers.

# Stock market jitters show capitalist instability

**Continued from page 3**

an article in the February 28 *New York Times*. "In two of the last three months, the manufacturing sector has shrunk, according to surveys by the Institute for Supply Management that have been out for weeks."

### Rise in mortgage defaults

At the same time, Freddie Mac, a massive semi-state-run mortgage buyer, announced February 27 that it is tightening its lending standards. The reason? More and more people who were lured during the recent housing boom into buying homes with "subprime" mortgages—high interest loans that require very little down payment and no proof of income—are now defaulting, and scores of the lenders that offered them are beginning to go belly up.

"During the housing boom that ended in 2005, money was poured with abandon into exotic home loans that let people buy homes with little down or without verifying their incomes," another *Times* article commented. Now, it said, "The easy money is making a quick exit out of risky mortgages."

"We made so much money you couldn't believe it," Kal Elsayed, a former executive at New Century Financial, the nation's number two subprime lender, told the *New York Times*. "And you didn't have to do anything. You just had to show up."

Those heady days are gone. Some 13.5 percent of subprime borrowers are either behind on payments or in foreclosure, according to the Mortgage Bankers Association.

On March 5, New Century Financial's shares plunged nearly 70 percent. And six of the top 25 firms specializing in subprime mortgages have joined the list of 28 such firms that have gone bankrupt.

The biggest losers are the thousands of people who bought into the idea that they could bank their ability to pay the loan on the increasing value of their home.

New home sales plunged by 16.6 percent in January, the most in 13 years. Builders are slashing inventories as housing starts fell by more than 14 percent and new home prices dropped.

"The notion that we saw a bottoming of the housing market in January is ludicrous," financial commentator John Maudlin noted in a March 2 article. That, he said, "takes years to accomplish, not a few quarters." He noted that "a lot of homes are going to come back onto the market over the next 12 months, when there is already a 7.8-month supply of homes for sale. This is going to depress house prices."

"Ben Bernanke, the chairman of the Federal Reserve, managed to calm the market, saying that one could reasonably hope for a stronger economy by midyear if housing stabilized soon, and if manufacturing strengthened," a *New York Times* editorial said two days after the market fall. "But those are big ifs."

## LETTERS

### Fight for Irish freedom

Writing as a former "provisional" Sinn Fein supporter who is currently serving time inside a Mississippi correctional facility, it is heartrending to see how far the Sinn Fein Executive has led the party from its original objective of self-determination for the Irish people. Sinn Fein's "vote" to back the police service of Northern Ireland is a body blow to the Republican movement.

I do not believe 10 men died on a hunger strike in 1981, protesting for political status, so that Sinn Fein might continue its political posturing in an Ireland that is still partitioned and under British rule.

Sinn Fein would do well to remember that it is a political party charged with achieving the goals of the Republican movement and not the movement itself. Sinn Fein no longer speaks for the people when it pledges the Republican movement will support the police force of an imperialist regime notorious for its brutality.

And where does this leave the working men and women of Ireland? I am not sure. But, of these things I am more than certain: the desire for freedom will never be extinguished in the Irish people. The struggle for a unified Ireland will continue and the people will again find their voice.

*A prisoner*
*Pearl, Mississippi*

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**The letters column is an open forum for all viewpoints on subjects of interest to working people. Please keep your letters brief. Where necessary they will be abridged. Please indicate if you prefer that your initials be used rather than your full name.**

# Union loses vote at Tyson

**BY KEVIN DWIRE**

GARDEN CITY, Kansas, March 3—Following an aggressive antiunion campaign by the company, workers at the Tyson Fresh Meats cattle slaughterhouse here voted two days ago 1,610 to 575 against representation by the United Steelworkers (USW).

Using videos, meetings in the plant, and full-page ads in local papers Tyson had threatened to cut pay and benefits and shut down the plant if the union won.

"It is completely possible that Tyson workers would end up with lower wages and benefits as a result of union negotiations," stated a full-page ad by Tyson in the February 28 edition of *La Semana*, a local Spanish-language newspaper. "If the United Steelworkers enters here and carries out a prolonged strike, Tyson could decide to increase the operations in other plants. . . . The only way to make sure there is never a strike is to keep the plant union free." The Tyson owners said in the ad that the recent USW strike against Goodyear did not result in any gains for the tire workers.

The USW began organizing here in January 2006. The union also helped build a rally of 3,000 here on April 10, 2006, to demand legalization of immigrants.

Frank Velazquez, a USW organizer, said, "The company's anti-union activities just became too much to overcome," reported the March 3 *Hutchinson News*. Other union organizers said prior to the election up to 200–300 Tyson workers attended pro-union meetings.

One worker with 10 years in the plant, who asked that his name not be published for fear of retaliation by the company, told the *Militant* that he supported the union and thought company harassment of workers on the job had declined because of the organizing drive. "I've worked at union plants before," he said. "It's better with a union. I hope that there is another union drive, but I don't know what is going to happen."

Maria Ortega, who has worked for three years in the plant, told the *Militant* she is for the union, and described job conditions. "I injured my shoulder and had to have surgery," she said. "My doctor said I needed to be on light duty, but the company tried to make me work the day of my surgery. When I did go back to work, my doctor said I could only work with one hand, but they told me to work with both hands or go home."

The March 3 issue of the *Garden City Telegram* reported that many Tyson workers "raised concerns about safety at the plant. The main concern has been with the plant's speed of the production chain, with pro-union workers stating their safety and work are dictated by a chain that never slows down, even when an employee is injured, at risk for injury or the production line lacks a sufficient number of workers."

The *Telegram* said Tyson spokesman Gary Mickelson stated that line speeds are set by industrial engineers according to the number of workers needed to "safely, yet effectively" process meat. Occupational Safety and Health Administration logs show 452 job injuries in the plant in 2006 and one fatality.

Discussions with workers in the area illustrated the polarization the bosses' antiunion campaign created.

One worker said "Union no!" and closed his door when asked about the vote. Another worker with 12 years at Tyson, who asked that his name not be used, said he voted against the union. "I have car payments to make," he said. "Times are tough in this town." A third said he was glad the company won, and that there is no difference with or without the union. Meanwhile, his next-door neighbor had a sign in front of his home saying in Spanish, "Vote Union—Vote Yes!—USW."

The last union drive here failed in 2000, when more than 1,800 workers voted against either the United Food and Commercial Workers (UFCW) or the United Workers Independent Union.

Lauro Ortega, who has 14 years in the plant, told the *Telegram* that the vote "leaves a bad taste in your mouth. But there's more work to be done to keep fighting injustice. . . . This is not the end of it. Just the beginning."

In its March 3 article, headlined "Union veto a surprise to some," the *Telegram* said that some of those involved in the organizing campaign expressed surprise at the 74 percent vote against the union.

The same week as the vote at Tyson, the UFCW announced an organizing drive at the National Beef plant in Dodge City, some 45 miles east of Garden City. One National Beef worker interviewed by the *Militant* here on the condition of anonymity said that the UFCW had begun passing out leaflets. Workers at the Cargill Meat Solutions plant in Dodge City and the National Beef plant in nearby Liberal are UFCW members.